

LOGOSOPHIA

A Pilgrim's Journal
of Life, Love & Literature



Issue #4
Autumn 2021



The Church: Ministry & Hierarchy



Greetings, fellow pilgrims!

Welcome to our fourth issue of LogoSophia Magazine! This issue is based on The Church, Ministry & Hierarchy. We have explanations of the hierarchy of our various denominations, a story, a hymn, a new way to look at *Frozen II*, and more! Please enjoy, and let us know what you think! I hope and pray that you are healthy and at peace during this difficult time. I would like to give a big thank you to Christopher Woods and Liz Nguyen, who have done wonderful work with us and are moving on to new opportunities. We will miss them both!

Pax!

Sarah Levesque
Editor in Chief

WANTED

- Readers of any faith to interact respectfully with writers and other readers through book/media suggestions and letters to the editor, as well as comments on LogoSophiaMag.com and social media
- Writers of Christian faith to augment the works of our Staff
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*Happy
Autumn!*



Courtesy of Sarah Levesque

A Short Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.

Letters to the Editor & Others

This is where we will be putting anything you send in - letters to the editor, notes to authors, questions, agreements and disagreements... we can't wait to see what you have to say! Just be sure to tell us what article you're responding to!

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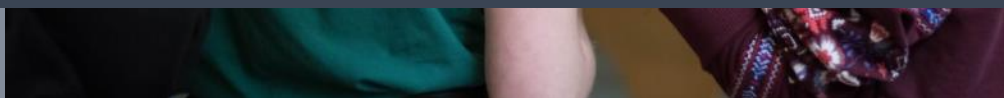
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About Ministry

By Amanda Pizzolatto

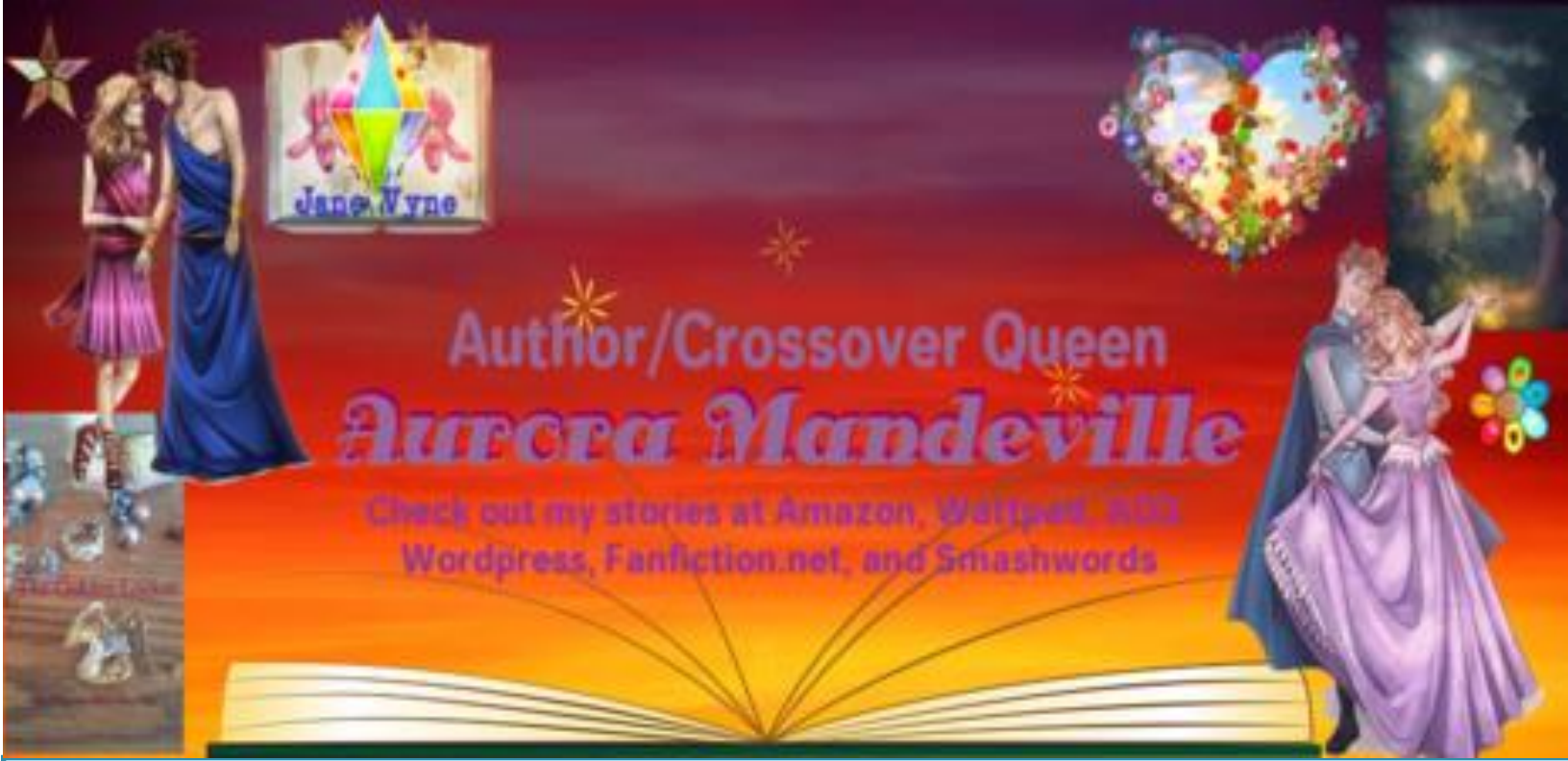


When people think of ministry, they often think of men in suits (not Men in Black) going around, knocking on doors, and asking you if you've heard of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, or of people heading over to other parts of the world, spreading the faith and getting people to convert. And while yes, this does include the majority of it, there are other things to do that should be considered part of that as well, aid to those in need and prayer. Yes, there is so much more to ministry than just going around and getting people to convert to your religion.

Though some may say that they know that helping others is a part of ministry too, tending to the poor and sick, not everyone does know that. Many do associate the word "ministry" with talking about the Bible and getting people to convert/accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. But the majority of the time, they just don't know more than that because they either don't want to know or just don't care to know. It doesn't relate to them, so it's not important information to know. They just know that coming around to their door and asking them to convert just feels very intrusive. If they wanted to know more, they would ask, they would seek out the information. It's just not the same as having the Girl Scouts coming around, trying to sell cookies, and even then there are people who don't want that as their home is a safe haven from the craziness of the world, a safe place for introverts. Yes, the early disciples and Apostles went out and talked to people to get them to convert, but I very highly doubt they went door to door to do it. No, more than likely they found places where people gathered, like a temple or a town square, and preached there. They shouted into the air, and those who stopped to listen would learn about it. But they would also show how to live this new life as well, by administering to the sick and poor.

Yes, the word 'minister' is a shortened form of 'administer', basically to give a needed service to someone, like providing food to the hungry and caring for the sick. It's not a feel-good work to get upvoted on social media, it's going out of your way to help someone who needs the help at that moment. And yes, sometimes, prayer is needed more than anything else. Many things, and many a miracle, have been obtained through a prayer. It especially helps when there is nothing else one can do in a situation. And there are quite a few times where it's all you can do. A quick prayer, knowing that someone is thinking of your well being, is enough to lift anyone's day. All someone needs sometimes is a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, someone to hold their hand when they're scared and reassure them.

There are many ways in which a person might need to be administered to, whether by talking about Jesus, by helping them out in times of need, or just simply saying a prayer with them; all it's supposed to do is to get us to care for one another. And different people need different things. With God's grace, we will come to know the best way to help someone, or He can guide us to the best way. The greatest commandment is to love God with our whole being so that one day we will be with Him in Heaven, but we are not meant to forget that we will not be alone with Him, for all the angels and the saints will praise Him day and night, singing "Glory to God in the Highest". Glory be indeed, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for in their great Wisdom have given us each other to help us become better people.



1. "...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."
2. "But we beseech you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves."
3. "Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
4. "And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Scripture Search

- A. Matthew 28:18-20
- B. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
- C. Matthew 25:44-46
- D. Mark 12:30-31



The Only TV Preacher I Trust

A Look at Father Brown

By Rose Therese

As a Christian who consumes a lot of secular media, I can get a little frustrated. As aptly pointed out by *Lutheran Satire* creator Hans Fienie in a recent video, it seems every third episode of such shows as *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, the villain is some kind of fundamentalist preacher. A memorable two part episode of *The Blacklist* featured a polygamist cult led by a charismatic, Bible-brandishing, end-times-prophesying pastor. And let's not even get started on Judge Claude Frollo from Disney's *Hunchback of Notre Dame* belting out a song about lust that begins with a self righteous prayer.* It seems that hypocrites abound in fiction, leaving Christ followers looking like either a bunch of crazies or just naive fools. But there is one man that has stood the test of time, a perennial favorite of even the most skeptical that has given Christians hope for nearly 100 years. His name? Father Brown.

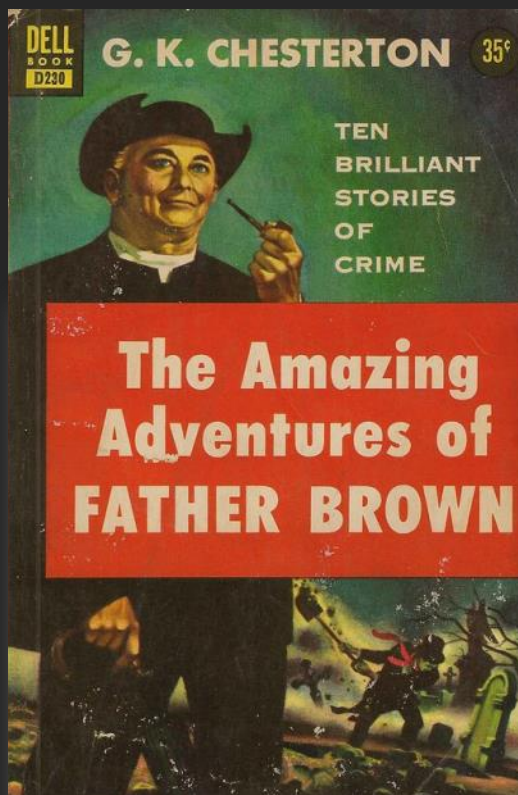
Created by apologist G.K. Chesterton, Father Brown is the modest and unassuming Catholic priest who often finds himself up to his collar in crime. Utilizing his keen powers of observation and knack for reading people, Brown aids the police in their investigations. People will talk to him when they won't talk to a police officer. Father takes this responsibility very seriously and treats all he meets with kindness and care.

The biggest priority for the priest is the state of someone's soul. He believes that no one is beyond salvation and sees to their soul first and foremost. In the episode of the 2013 TV series, "The Bride of Christ", it is this concern that drives the plot. Father Brown is witness to not one, but two poisonings, and eventually deduces the identity of the murderer, a heartbroken young woman with a secret. Through his investigation, he exposes abuse in the Magdalene Laundry system, and is able to set the mind of the perpetrator at ease. Furthermore, every time Father Brown comes across a dead body (which is more often than you'd think, even for a priest!) his first step is to pull out his stole and pray for the soul of the departed, whether Catholic or not.

Father Brown won't even give up on his most ardent foe. A man named Flambeau, a thief of religious relics, frequently locks horns with the Father, the Moriarty to his Sherlock. Flambeau steals these relics, it seems, to get revenge against a church that hurt him. Brown sees his lashing out much like a parent would see a child's tantrum - as an irrational response to hurt. Brown wants to help Flambeau in the worst way and help heal those wounded parts of his heart. Whether Flambeau will take advantage of Brown's kindness remains to be seen by your faithful correspondent. (I have not yet seen the entire series.)

Father Brown doesn't just run into the criminal types on his adventures. He is always accompanied by a variety of friends. First is Lady Felicia, a beautiful noblewoman with a nose for adventure; Suzie, a shy immigrant from Poland; Mrs. McCarthy, the good natured but crotchety Parish Secretary; and Sid, a young lad who often becomes the Father's partner in (solving) crime. Each of these characters has some secret hurt they're hiding and it's the Father's compassion that brings them to light in some fashion. In that light, Father Brown delivers a healing touch, often with a dash of humor to help the medicine go down.

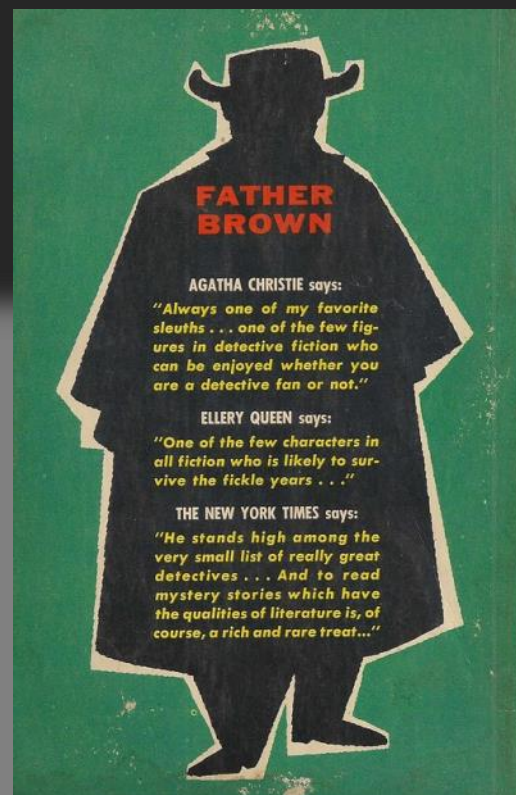
*In *Hunchback's* defense, it is only Frollo who is condemned as a sinner and hypocrite, never ever the church, represented by the kind and compassionate Archdeacon. In this way, Disney did the Christian Church as a whole a great service in a time of turmoil for the Catholic Church in particular.



I titled this article “The Only TV Preacher I Trust” for a reason. I find that many times, TV pastors and preachers come off as fake. Maybe they don’t preach the “health and wealth” gospel or act in some way contrary to their calling, but I find them cold and impersonal. There’s exceptions, of course, like “Papa Chuck” Swindoll, but on the whole I can’t say I’m impressed with a great many of them. Then there’s characters like Father Brown

(And to be fair, Shepherd Book from *Firefly*) who strike me. These men aren’t strangers, they’re my friends, more like local pastors than anything else. This is of course, a credit to the actors for being masters of their craft and the writers for breathing life into these characters.

There’s a reason Father Brown has endured: people want to believe that there are good men hiding in unassuming places, brilliant minds hiding in plain clothes, faithful men who mean what they say on Sunday morning. We want to see that goodness and hope will win out, that evil will be punished, and the innocent avenged. It’s characters like Father Brown that remind us that it’s possible.



Writers Wanted!

LSM is looking for more writers
to contribute to

- Controversy Corner -
- the magazine at large -
- the blog -

CONTROVERSY CORNER

What does your hierarchy look like? How do pastors get installed?
What are various ways people minister in/through your church?

What is Controversy Corner?

Controversy Corner is the section of LogoSophia Magazine where people of different faith traditions discuss controversial topics in a succinct manner.

If you would like to submit a topic for discussion, please let us know!

Don't see your denomination represented? Help us fix that! We're always looking for new writers!

Disagree with the representative of your denomination? Write in and tell us why in a respectful manner, and we'll publish it in our next magazine under "Letters to the Editor & Comments"!

For these and any other questions, comments or suggestions, email us at Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com.

Confessional Lutheran: J.C. Ellis

Jesus > Apostles > Bishops/Presbyters > Laity. In Lutheranism there is only one Holy Office of Ministry and so bishops and presbyters are truly and essentially the same. In terms of church government there may be a distinction between bishops and presbyters. A bishop is a pastor to presbyters. Some Confessional Lutheran Synods do not use the title of bishop but prefer Regional Pastor or District President but all believe and confess that there is no difference in essence between bishop and presbyter. Presbyters may ordain other presbyters and may install a presbyter into the office of bishop.

CONTROVERSY CORNER

What does your hierarchy look like? How do pastors get installed?

What are various ways people minister in/through your church?

Nondenominational Evangelical Protestant: Elizabeth Nguyen

The church is normally led by a group of Elders, including a head Pastor who helps to oversee and preach to the congregation. I agree with the more traditional churches I've been raised in where leadership roles would only be taken by qualified men in the church as outlined in Scripture. Since nondenominational churches are independent from each other, they can vary between complementarian and egalitarian beliefs. However, there are plenty of ministries outside of the pastoral office where both men and women can work to share the Gospel with others. Within the congregation, there are always ministries divided by age group and each ministry forms a fellowship around worship, bible study, and prayer. There can be other ministries that can be catered to a specific need within the area of a church, if anyone in the church feels led to start one, like for college students, those in poverty, individuals recovering from drugs & alcohol use, overseas missionaries, and the like.

Roman Catholic: Sarah Levesque

The Pope, the earthly leader of the church (see my article), is above Archbishops, priests who are in charge of regions and appointed by the Pope, are above Bishops, priests who are in charge of areas, appointed by the Pope, generally under an archbishop, are above Priests, who have the ability to administer sacraments and consecrate the Eucharist, are often pastors of parishes, and are ordained by and under the authority of a bishop, though they may be part of a religious community instead and thus under the authority of an abbot. They are above Deacons, who help the priests in their parish duties and may administer sacraments though they cannot consecrate the Eucharist, are above The Laity, the common people (such as myself), who have many ministries of their own.

Two authoritative groups which I have not yet explained are cardinals and abbots and abbesses. Cardinals (divided into Cardinal-Bishops, Cardinal-Priests and Cardinal-Deacons) are the Pope's advisors, and it is the full College of Cardinals that is responsible for electing a new Pope upon the death of the previous one. Abbots and abbesses are roughly equal to bishops, but they only have authority over their own individual communities of brothers or sisters, and are subject to the authority of the respective heads of their orders.

[I AM] The One You've Been Waiting For

By Liz Nguyen

Having liked the original movie, I was really excited to see Frozen II last year in November. I hoped for an enjoyable story, but I also hoped for a good soundtrack even more. 'For the First Time in Forever' and 'Let It Go' were my two top Frozen songs since hearing them in 2013. I listen to Disney music much more than I watch the movies anymore so I love it when songs can inspire the imagination and touch your emotions. Incredibly, I felt more connected to Frozen II than I had with other Disney movies in the past. While part of it was because of the plot (spoilers ahead), I believe it's because I could think of God while listening to its songs.

The connection first started with the song 'Into the Unknown' which is sung by Elsa in the first half of the movie. Elsa hears this mysterious voice calling for her from afar, but she tries to ignore it. She wants to stay in her kingdom with her family (Anna, Kristoff, Sven, and Olaf) because she found peace with them after the events of the first movie. However, she still wonders why she was born with ice powers, as if she was meant for something more. The mysterious voice might be her way of finding out, but it would be too risky to follow it 'into the unknown.'

Then Elsa shows her vulnerability mid-way into the song, singing, "Or are you someone out there who's a little bit like me, Who knows deep down, I'm not where I'm meant to be?" If there was someone who understood our pain and our weaknesses, and knows we, as God's children, aren't a part of this fallen world, that would be Jesus.

"For we do not have a high priest who can't be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one who has been in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin." — Hebrews 4:15 WEB

Even more amazingly, you watch Elsa declare to the sky, "Are you out there? Do you know me? Can you feel me? Can you show me?" With every question, she sends a wisp of snow into the air, as if trying to send a message back to the caller. We, too, question whether God is out there; if he knows us; if he can feel us; if he can show us the way to him. When we feel the goodness of his presence, are we not like Elsa who asks the voice, "Where are you going? Don't leave me alone, How do I follow you, Into the unknown?"

Elsa's search for the voice felt so much more worthwhile to me after I heard this song. It already

topped ‘Let It Go’ for me, and the movie wasn’t even over. So by the time Elsa finally finds out where the call is coming from, she starts singing another song called ‘Show Yourself.’

The whole first half of ‘Show Yourself’ defines Elsa’s resolve after the questions asked in ‘Into the Unknown.’ She sings, “Show yourself, I’m dying to meet you, Show yourself, It’s your turn, Are you the one I’ve been looking for all of my life? Show yourself, I’m ready to learn.” So many people, including ourselves, want God to show himself to us. There’s a point where we’re willing to know more about our Creator who loves us so much.

So as soon as the music reaches its climax, it is revealed that the voice is Iduna, or rather a recorded memory of Elsa and Anna’s mother. And Elsa, in surprise and elation of this reveal, sees another memory of her mother singing to her, “Come, my darling, homeward bound,” and Elsa responds out loud in grand emotion, “I am found!”

That line just blew me away, and Elsa’s powerful voice definitely had a way of making me tear up at these words. It felt like when Hagar called to God in Genesis 16, “You are a God who sees,” when she felt alone and hurt in the wilderness. The only one who truly knows us and our hearts, even more than ourselves, is the Lord Almighty. There’s no hiding from him, yet he still chose to love us and die for us despite our sinfulness.

After such a high note, I didn’t expect to feel conflicted by the last set of lyrics. Iduna starts singing ‘Show Yourself’ to Elsa, flipping the meaning of these words to her daughter, “Show yourself, Step into your power, Throw yourself, Into something new, You are the one you’ve been waiting for, All of your life.” While it all was a positive message that many people would click with, I wasn’t too thrilled to see the song turn into a message of self-empowerment, a theme I’ve been tired of seeing lately in movies since it just disregards our dependence on God.

I just imagine that if God was singing Iduna’s part, he would say “Show yourself your light, your saltiness, Step into MY power. I AM the one you’ve been waiting for, All of your life.” When Moses tried to tell God that he couldn’t deliver his message because of his poor speech, God didn’t tell him that the power was already inside him, nor that it was by his own will power that could do anything.

“Yahweh said to him, ‘Who made man’s mouth? Or who makes one mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Isn’t it I, Yahweh? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth, and teach you what you shall speak.’”

— Exodus 4:11-12 WEB

Even when we have the Holy Spirit within us today, all the glory goes to God, not to us. Apart from him, we can do nothing (John 15:5), yet we can often misattribute our success to ourselves. The culture around us doesn’t help. I can’t really blame the song too much since the movie lives within a

culture that prioritizes independence and freedom for the individual. When the world promises that we can live in the fullness of ourselves, God promises us just Himself, knowing that we can't even satisfy ourselves, nor protect ourselves, nor save our own souls.

Interestingly, the plot of the first Frozen had Elsa running away, cutting away all ties with her kingdom and her sister, since her powers seemed to make reconciliation impossible. But we see at the end that the two sisters still loved each other, and that love ultimately reverses the curse upon the kingdom. The two sisters reconciled and returned to each other's lives again. In the sequel, it sort of ends in reverse: the two sisters end up separated in the last half, briefly reuniting towards the end, and then mutually separating to lead separate kingdoms.

Many would say Frozen II carries a message of self-discovery and self-love, and I think that kind of message is encouraging in an anxiety-ridden world. However, I'm just thinking a lot about how God's message to us is different than what the world will often and repeatedly say. When Elsa sings, "I have always been so different, Normal rules did not apply, Is this the day, are you the way, I finally find out why?" I'm inclined to remember Jesus saying:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." — John 14:6 WEB

Background Photo by Nick Iliasov on Unsplash

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Instead, let the Spirit **renew**
your thoughts and attitudes.
Put on your **new** nature,
created to be like God –
truly righteous and holy.

Ephesians 4:21-22 NLT



**PARTING SEAS
BIBLE STUDY**

TODAY 11/4 • 7 PM • UNION COURT IN THE MUB

On the Ordination of Women

By Ian Wilson



The ordination of women is a very hot-button topic in Christianity today. Numerous Protestant denominations permit women to be ordained to the pastorate, while more traditional churches do not permit this practice. But why? Does the Bible not value women the same as men? Are these traditionalists just bigots? Is God misogynist? These questions are certainly worth asking, and I will do my very best to answer them based on Scripture, reason, history, and church tradition.

Nowhere in Scripture is a woman ever ordained to the office of pastor. Prophet, yes, but that is another matter. Jesus, while He did have many important women in his life on Earth, did not ordain any women to be Apostles. There were no women at the last supper. There were, however, deaconesses in the early church, but deaconesses do not serve the same function as pastors or priests.

It is also stated in both the New and Old Testaments that man is the head of the home and that the wife is to submit to her husband as to Christ. That being said, there is quite a lot of nuance in that statement, but that is a discussion for another time. Needless to say, a woman is not a man's slave to do with as he pleases. Now, how can a woman be the head of a local church, yet submit to her husband at home? This is illogical.



The New Testament pastorate is to be a mirror image of the Old Testament priesthood. Only men were priests. The priest's job was to make sacrifices on behalf of the people and represent God's "face" to the people. Such is the role of the pastor. The pastor represents the people to God, making intercession for them and performing rituals for them, and is to represent Christ to the people; to make Christ present in their lives in a more personal, physical way. Now, as Christ is male, so the pastor must also be male.


The pastor exists to lead the flock in righteousness; it's an office of sacrificial love. He isn't simply there to get behind a pulpit and preach. A woman can do that just as well as a man. Women have indeed been gifted with the gift of prophecy (that is, speaking the truth and exhorting people to

righteousness) and should be allowed to exercise this gift, under the guidance of a spiritual leader. Preaching is just one function of a pastor.

Does this simply mean that God is sexist? Well, yes and no. God is sexist in the way that our current culture defines sexism. Our current culture, however, has wandered far away from God. God created humans male and female, and He called this “very good.” He treats men and women differently because He made them to be different and He delights in this difference. What our culture seems to be saying is that the only way to be important in the church is to do the work of the pastor. This is a fabrication of the devil and needs to be combated aggressively. The pastorate is an office of service. Women can, do, and must serve, but in a different capacity; as wives, helpers, mothers, spiritual mothers, and preachers of the gospel.

At the end of the day, God is not defined by temporal trends. He created men and women to exhibit different qualities of His character, and to bring Him glory in ways only they can do. Only men can be fathers, spiritual and physical, and only women can be mothers. On the night our Lord was betrayed, His male disciples all fled, but the women would not leave Him. They were courageous and gave themselves over to death. It was the women, not the men, who were the first to know that the Lord had arisen. God loves women, and because He loves women, he has prepared for them greater, more enduring work than the work of the pastor.





IAN WILSON

An ancient evil threatens our world. Who will wield the mighty sword and slay wicked tyrants?

Find out in the epic graphic novel Legend of the Sword Bearer!

Learn more at legendsandsongs.weebly.com

Book & Media Recommendations

Screwtape Letters by CS Lewis (1942). A collection of letters written from Screwtape, a devil of consequence, to his nephew Wormwood, a new tempter, about the best way to tempt humans. I found myself nodding slowly often, and flinching occasionally as I realized that my personal tempter had caught me in the trap Screwtape was describing at the time.

- Sarah

The Call to Mastery Podcast hosted by Jordan Raynor (2019 - present) Listen to the amazing stories of Christian entrepreneurs, creatives, doctors, and more. Raynor sets up in-depth interviews which dive into how one, no matter what job field they're in, can share the glory of God through their work.

-Liz

RZIM: Ask Away Broadcasts hosted by Vince & Jo Vitale, and Michael David (2017 - present)

When faced with ultimately tough questions about Christianity and the Bible from their listeners, Vince, Jo, and Michael come together in this podcast to break down each question under the light of the Gospel. They bring encouragement and compassion to even the most difficult and controversial questions they receive from their listeners.

- Liz

A Hollens Family Christmas (album) by Peter Hollens (2016).

A delightful collection of songs and hymns sung in various styles by Peter Hollens, his wife, and many friends.

-Sarah

What do YOU want to suggest?

Let us know at Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com

Jenny Goodnight by Killarney Traynor (2020). Set in the semi-civilized California of 1875, pistol-packing Jenny, former missionary to the Native Americans, becomes a main suspect for a murder...

- Sarah

Holy God We Praise Thy Name

By Ignaz Franz (German), translated to English by Clarence A. Walworth



1. Ho - ly God, — we praise — Thy name!
2. Hark! the loud — ce - les - tial hymn
3. Ho - ly Fa - ther, Ho - ly Son,



1. Lord of all — we bow — be - fore Thee,
2. An - gel choirs — a - bove — are rais - ing;
3. Ho - ly Spir - it, Three — we name Thee,



1. All on earth — Thy scep - ter claim,
2. Cher - u - bim — and Ser - a - phim
3. While in es - sence on - ly One,



1. All in heav-en a - bove — a - dore Thee:
2. In un - ceas - ing cho - rus prais - ing:
3. Un - di - vid - ed God — we claim Thee,



1. In - fi - nite — Thy vast do - main,
2. Fill the heav-ens with sweet ac - cord:
3. And a - dor - ing bend the knee,



1. Ev - er - last - ing is Thy rein.
2. Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord!
3. While we own — the mys - ter - y.



PETER & FARAMIR

STEWARDS OF THE KINGDOM

BY SARAH LEVESQUE



Lately, I've been into Lord of the Rings even more than normal. I've been writing a fanfiction about Eowyn and delving deep into the books to do so, plus I recently finished listening to the Rob Inglis audiobook version of the trilogy for the umpteenth time, and the Silmarillion as well. And I've been struck by a new realization: the Pope is to Jesus what the Steward of Gondor is to the King of Gondor.

Hang on, what? Did I read that right?

Yep, you probably did. Let me explain. First off, let's look at the term "steward". Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines it like this (1):

steward (noun)

stew-ard | \ 'stü-ərd , 'styü-; 'st(y)ürd

Definition of steward

1: one employed in a large household or estate to manage domestic concerns (such as the supervision of servants, collection of rents, and keeping of accounts)

2: SHOP STEWARD

3: a fiscal agent

4a: an employee on a ship, airplane, bus, or train who manages the provisioning of food and attends passengers

b: one appointed to supervise the provision and distribution of food and drink in an institution

5: one who actively directs affairs : MANAGER

steward (verb)

stewarded; stewarding; stewards

transitive verb

: to act as a steward for : MANAGE

intransitive verb

: to perform the duties of a steward

For the purpose of this article, let's stick to noun definitions 1 and 5: basically, someone who manages the affairs of an estate or – in our case – a kingdom. As Denathor says to Gandalf, "...and to him [the Steward of Gondor] there stands no purpose higher in the world as it now stands than the good of Gondor; and the rule of Gondor, my lord, is mine and no other man's, unless the king should come again." To which Gandalf replies, "Unless the king should come again? Well, my lord Steward, it is your task to keep some kingdom still against that event, which few now look to see. In that task you shall have all the aid that you are pleased to ask for" (2). The word "against" here does not mean that he is to keep the kingdom from the king, but only that he is to keep it until the king comes.

This outlook is largely true of stewards across various times and cultures. Let's take a minute to look at the English steward of medieval times. This castle staff member was typically in charge of the procuring of supplies and management of staff, as well as all financial and legal matters. Talk about a big job! Larger estates sometimes had two stewards – one for the castle and its internal affairs, one for the law and lands, who occasionally represented his lord at the royal court (3). Medieval England also had a Lord Steward, an official of the royal court whose symbol of authority was a white rod (4). He was the head of the Board of the Green Cloth, which seems to have been in charge of the treasury and expenses, as well as the court of law for the palace (5).

Tolkien's stewards seem to have been based on these English stewards, at least to some degree, for the Stewards of Gondor also carry a white rod to symbolize their authority, which passed from father to son (6). Faramir told Frodo a bit of the history of the Stewards of Gondor, saying,

"We of my house are not of the line of Elendil, though the blood of Numenor is in us. For we reckon back our line to Mardil, the good steward, who ruled in the king's stead when he went away to war. And that was King Earnur, last of the line of Anarion, and childless, and he never came back. And the stewards have governed the city since that day, though it was many generations of Men ago. (7)

But though the Stewards rule Gondor, it is yet a kingdom, and they never take the title king. As Faramir continues,

"And this I remember of Boromir as a boy, when we together learned the tale of our sires and the history of our city, that always it displeased him that his father was not king. 'How many hundreds of years needs it to make a steward a king, if the king returns not?' he asked. 'Few years, maybe, in other places of less royalty,' my father answered. 'In Gondor ten thousand years would not suffice.' Alas, poor Boromir! Does that not tell you something of him?" (8)

At this point, you're probably thinking, *what in the world does this have to do with the Pope?* I'm almost there. First we have to look at the Stewards of Israel. Like the Stewards of England and Gondor, the Stewards of Israel also had a symbol of their authority – the keys to the kingdom. Let's look at a passage from Isaiah 22:

¹⁵ Thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which is over the house, and say, ¹⁶ What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock? ¹⁷ Behold, the LORD will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee. ¹⁸ He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house. ¹⁹ And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down. ²⁰ And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: ²¹ And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. ²² And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. ²³ And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. ²⁴ And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. (9)

I know, that was a long quote. And now someone's probably saying *This passage is speaking of a treasurer, not a Steward, if you look at verse 15*. Yes, for that is one of the Steward's roles. But if you look at verse 21, it says, "...I will commit thy government into his hands." Not just the treasury, but the whole government. And someone else might question the opening and shutting, but that is just to say that the Steward has the authority to make decisions that no one save the King may revoke.

Now we can finally get to the Pope, starting with the first Pope, Peter. He received the office of Steward of the Kingdom of God on Earth when he correctly answered Jesus's question, "Who do you say I am?" in Matthew 16.

¹⁶ And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. ¹⁷ And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (10)

Sounds sort of like Isaiah 22:22, doesn't it. Yes, Jesus uses the phrases 'binding' and 'loosing' instead of 'opening' and 'shutting', but the phrasing, along with the keys, carries over that this person has the authority to make decisions that none save the King can overturn. This overturning is shown immediately after this Matthew passage, where Jesus rebukes Peter for protesting the idea of His death. Jesus is incredibly good at using the Law and the Prophets to help Him make His points, for the people he talked to would have heard that passage of Isaiah and would know their cultural

history – it was one of the Jew’s strongest points, as far as I can tell. So when the apostles heard Jesus giving Peter the keys of the Kingdom and giving authority to make decisions, they would have known that Jesus was giving Peter the Stewardship of His Kingdom. This would also apply to any early Jews who read Matthew’s Gospel, which was written specifically to the Jewish community.

One point I commonly hear is that Jesus also gave binding and loosing authority to the rest of the disciples. This is certainly true, being written in Matthew 18:18, two chapters and untold days after He gave Peter his authority. To the other disciples, Jesus gave only the binding and loosing, not the keys that symbolled the Stewardship – those were given to Peter alone. But let’s look at the passage in question. First Jesus talks about the 99 sheep and the lost sheep, then He continues,

¹⁵ Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. ¹⁶ But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. ¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. ¹⁸ Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (11)

Something I find interesting is that verse 18 is commonly thought of as being said directly to and about the disciples, while all the other verses in the passage are commonly thought of as being directed to the whole church. Perhaps verse 18 also refers to the church – that she has the power to bind and loose. However, John 20:23 must also be considered. This passage shows Jesus appearing to the apostles after His resurrection:

²⁰ And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD. ²¹ Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: ²³ Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. ²⁴ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. (12)

Here, at least, it seems that the power to bind and loose comes to the disciples in particular, though it seems to leave Thomas out. But perhaps Jesus added him in *in absentia*, or perhaps later. I couldn’t say. But this passage does not include the keys to the Kingdom, already given to Peter long before. Thus, it was only Peter who received the authority of Steward of the Kingdom, thereby being elevated over his fellow disciples. And that authority has been passed down even to Pope Francis in our time.

Hang on, Peter denied Jesus three times! Why does he get to rule? An excellent point. But if you look to John 21:15 and following, Jesus led Peter into affirming him three times in atonement for that sin:

¹⁵ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. ¹⁶ He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. ¹⁷ He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. ¹⁹ This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. (13)

Jesus recognized that Peter was only human and thus was susceptible to sin and making mistakes, and so, once Peter makes his atonement, Jesus forgives him and reaffirms his mission – to watch out for His sheep. In effect, he is returning Peter to his vocation as temporal shepherd of the flock, the Steward of the Kingdom. Jesus knows all humans make mistakes and sin, whether they are in authority or not. Look at Gondor – though the Stewards of Gondor are supposed to be waiting for the king, Denathor refused to accept the rightful king, saying,

“...So! With the left hand thou wouldst use me for a little while as a shield against Mordor, and with the right bring up this Ranger of the North to supplant me.

“But I say to thee, Gandalf Mithrandir, I will not be thy tool! I am Steward of the House of Anarion. I will not step down to be the dotard chamberlain of an upstart. Even were his claim proved to me, still he comes but of the line of Isildur. I will not bow to such a one, last of a ragged house long bereft of lordship and dignity.” (14)

Denathor was too proud to relinquish his authority, expecting the king would never come. Likewise, there have been plenty of Popes who did not live up to their purpose and calling. And yet, the Church of Rome still stands, because Jesus told Peter, “the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it” (14). No purely human institution could have survived 2000 years of turmoil and wildly inconsistent leaders. But the worst Popes could not change set dogma, for though doctrine may be changeable, dogma, once enacted, is immutable. But even bad Popes didn’t change much doctrine, instead mostly leaving the Church to her own devices or listening to the more holy men around them and bettering the Church despite their own personal vices (16).

Thus, as King Earnur of Gondor appointed Mardil as his Steward to rule the kingdom of Gondor in his absence, and this Stewardship was handed down until the long-awaited king returned, so Jesus appointed Peter as his Steward to rule the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth in His absence, and this Stewardship, known as the papacy, was and will continue to be handed down until the long awaited King returns. On that triumphant day, may the Pope be as ready as Faramir to hand over his authority and proclaim the return of the King (17).

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LETTER TO THE AUTHOR

From Killarney Traynor
To Dorothy L Sayers

Dear Ms. Sayers,

Let me start off by saying that I had a mild (maybe a little more than mild) crush on your private detective, Lord Peter Wimsey. I loved his humor and the charming way he breezed through life. When I learned that you based him on a combination of Fred Astaire and Bertie Wooster, that just made him even better. Frankly, compared to the more serious, depressing, and annoying novels of the time (I'm looking at you, Fitzgerald), Lord Peter Wimsey's lighter take on serious subjects (like... I don't know, murder), was much appreciated.

I must confess, however, that I did not initially like *Gaudy Night*. I've always rather struggled with Harriet Vane, although I really appreciated her honesty in *Strong Poison*. *Gaudy Night*, as you know (but I have to say here because this is an open letter), follows Harriet when she returns to her alma mater to help solve a poison pen mystery. But really, she's there to escape the attentions - and the constant proposals - of Lord Peter. When the poison pen caper turns deadly, she of course has to bring in the dapper sleuth and as they race to solve the mystery, they also reach a turning point in their relationship.

Good stuff, right? Eh, the teenaged me was less than enthused. See, as I may have mentioned earlier, I had a crush on Lord Peter and I didn't like what I saw as Harriet's dithering and leading him on. (Poor dear - its so hard to be pursued by a charming, rich, thoughtful, clever aristocrat, isn't it?) I thought the book slow - twittering on about freedom and women's rights and women's place, and yada yada yada, can we get on with the murder, thank you very much? I also found the tone rather affected. For heaven's sake, Harriet only (spoiler-alert) accepts the marriage proposal when it's made in Latin! How pretentious can you get?

So... I didn't like it. But then, I have never been quite as smart as I think I am. So I finished it and gave my copy away. Only, it wouldn't really go away. The book bothered me. Unlike other books I have read and dismissed, this one haunted me like the echo of a significant dream. Finally, a decade older, a tad smarter, and a little bit wiser, I gave in and read it again. Boy. Did I miss everything. *Gaudy Night*, as it turns out, is not about murder. It's about the balance of freedom and obligation, of marriage versus the single life. It's about the value (or shackles) of the academic life versus the shackles (or value) of the homemaker. It's about being a woman and what that means both practically and ideologically. It's about finding your place in a world too quick to shove people into boxes and then abandon them there. *Gaudy Night* is, quite frankly, one of the best books I have ever read. And I totally misread it the first time. So this letter is an apology. You blew my mind, Ms. Sayers. You proved that even something as simple as a paperback murder mystery can be a game changer, a philosophical challenge, and a classic.

Thanks for pushing me, Ms. Vane - er, Ms. Sayers. I owe you one.

Yours,
Humbled,
KJ

PS: For the record, the Latin proposal still doesn't work for me. (We get it! Harriet's a classical genius, too good for Lord Peter! Yeesh!) But honestly? I'm probably wrong about that too.

The Bishop's Secret

By Ian Wilson

Bishop Dubric went for his morning stroll about Camelot. It was a cloudy day, as usual. Perhaps bringing with it a light rain, later. Various townsfolk greeted the bishop as he walked about the town, and he returned their greeting. He was, however, lost in thought. Something didn't seem right. His reverie was broken by Taliesin's greeting. The bard approached him in the marketplace, inclining his head as he did so.

"Greetings, my son," replied Dubric.

"I have a matter to discuss with you," said Taliesin.

Bishop Dubric motioned for him to enter the apothecary shop.

"Good morning, Reverend Father, Taliesin," said the apothecary.

"Good morning, daughter," said the Bishop.

"I assumed that we would be alone," said Taliesin, narrowing his eyes.

"There is little that you can say to me that you could not say to Bryn," replied the Bishop.

"As a lay sister, I am sworn to obey my bishop in all things," said Bryn.

"I had a dream last night," said Taliesin.

Bishop Dubric was taken aback. He'd learned to trust Taliesin's dreams through their years of experience together.

"What sort of dream?" he asked.

"Menuu the Magician is likely to try and take the child."

"Oh, good Lord!" exclaimed Bryn.

"I'm not surprised," said Dubric. "Annwyn has been trying to take the throne of Camelot for generations. Tintagel provided the perfect opportunity."

"Would not baptism protect him?" asked Bryn.

"It would protect his spirit, yes," replied Dubric, "but Menuu may still attempt to take him to Annwyn."

"I could make a protective ring around his crib," offered Bryn.

"Menuu would find a way around it," said Taliesin, ruefully. "There's only one

solution: hide him."

"I doubt King Uther will go along with that," said Dubric.

"I know Queen Igerna will not," said Bryn.

"It's the only way to avoid tragedy," said Taliesin. "My dreams are clear: he must go away."

"And you're certain this will happen?" asked King Uther.

The King of Camelot sat in his large throne, listening attentively to Bishop Dubric and chief bard Taliesin as they gave him the news.

"Not if we act," said the bard.

Uther stroked his beard.

"And how do you propose we act?" asked the king.

"You don't without me."

Queen Igerna stood in the doorway of the great hall, the royal babe in her arms.

"Your grace," said Taliesin, bowing at the waist.

"Igerna, what are you doing?" asked Uther to his queen.

"If our son is in danger, I want to know about it."

"When you made that pact with Menuu the magician," said Dubric, "you made a pact with Lord Tegid, and he will not rest until your debt to him has been paid."





Uther frowned. The remorse of his actions at Tintagel still stung.

"What are our options?" asked Igerna.

"We must send him away to be fostered," answered Dubric.

"Absolutely not!" cried Igerna, clutching the child close.

"My queen, I am sorry it has come to this," said Taliesin, "but my visions are clear: if the child stays here in Camelot, he is in grave danger."

Igerna's face turned from rage to fear. Taliesin's visions had proven trustworthy in the past, and only the foolish questioned him now.

"Then to whom do we send him?" asked Uther.

"Leave that to me," said Dubric. "I will find a suitable foster father among your allies."

"Alright," said Igerna. "I trust you, Reverend Father."

"Do not put your trust in me," said Dubric. "I only follow in my Father's footsteps."

As the Bishop of Camelot, it wasn't necessary for Bishop Dubric to lead the morning and evening liturgies every day: he could easily delegate the responsibility to one of the priests in his charge, but he enjoyed doing it.

The church smelled of incense and candle wax. The congregants gathered as they did every evening. Igerna entered, with her daughters, Morgana and Morgause, and her infant son in tow. Uther entered a short time later with a dour expression on his face: an expression that didn't change for the entire liturgy.

As they prayed, chanted, and sang, Bishop Dubric silently lifted his prayer to the ears of the Almighty. He begged for the wisdom and knowledge to know what must be done to protect the kingdom. He prayed on Uther's behalf, and on behalf of his child.

As Dubric stood before the congregation to say benediction, he was interrupted by a commotion from outside the church. The sound of shouting and horns blowing filled the air. The liturgy concluded, the congregation immediately went outside to see what was the matter.





In the town square of Camelot was a grand sight. A small band of mounted warriors attended a large, red-haired man on a mighty horse.

"Kynyr!" cried Uther as he ran toward the red-haired man, arms wide.

"Uther!" shouted the red-haired man. The two kings embraced one another as brothers, though they were not kin. Their bond had been forged in the heat of battle and was as strong as any iron. Kynyr clapped Uther on the back.

"How are ya, lad?" he asked boisterously. "Heard you had a dust-up with the Saxons last fortnight."

"We sent them packing," answered Uther.

Kynyr laughed. When Kynyr laughed it seemed all of Camelot laughed with him.

"What brings you to Camelot?" asked Uther.

"How could I miss the christening of the next high king?!"

Igerna joined her husband in the courtyard, accompanied by Bishop Dubric and Taliesin.

"Kynyr, this is my wife, Igerna, and my son," said Uther.

"Good to meet ya, lass!" said Kynyr. "The only woman who could've won this old warhorse's heart."

Kynyr clapped Uther on the back again and laughed.

"I don't see Anna with you," said Uther, referring to Kynyr's wife. "Is she well?"

"Aye, that she is," replied Kynyr with a nod. "Better than fine. She stayed behind with me own wee one; Kay."

"I had heard you'd been gifted a son," said Dubric. "Congratulations!"

"A strong lad, he'll make a fine knight someday."

"You must be half-starved," said Igerna. "Let us get you some supper."

"A crust of bread and some ale would nay go amiss," said the great king of Dyfed.

They sat down at Uther's round table to eat and drink. They talked and jested, and Uther and Kynyr told stories of their exploits. Dubric said little.

"So there we were, surrounded by Saxon warriors," said Kynyr, lowering his





voice to a near whisper. Morgause and Morgana stared wide-eyed at the red-haired king.

"They were all fast asleep in their tents at that time. There was no way out, without alerting them to our presence. Then Uther comes runnin' outta the wood stark naked, screaming at the top of his lungs and swinging a sword over his head! There was so much confusion, we took those scalawags by surprise and won the day!"

All laughed, but none so hard as Uther and Kynyr.

"Were you there for that, Taliesin?" asked Morgana.

"I was," replied the bard, smiling from ear to ear.

"And let's not forget Taliesin's song," said Uther.

"Aye, that mad string-plucker summoned an army of ants to crawl up their trousers and bite their legs!" said Kynyr with another hearty laugh.

"I want to learn to summon an army of ants!" said Morgana eagerly.

"One day, Morgana," said Taliesin.

The meal concluded, Igerna and Uther bade Kynyr and his warriors goodnight and retired to their bed-chamber. Dubric tarried in the dining hall. The Bishop drew Kynyr aside.

"There is a matter I must speak with you about, my lord," he said.

"Reverend Father," began Kynyr, "with all due respect, me men and I have ridden all the way from Dyfed, and look forward to getting some shuteye. Can it not wait until morning?"

"It can," replied the Bishop. "I will meet with you at the church before the morning liturgy."

Kynyr nodded his head in assent. He wondered what the Bishop could possibly need from him, but he was honor-bound to provide it, whatever it was.

A new day dawned on Camelot as Kynyr entered the narthex of the cathedral of Camelot. Dubric and Taliesin awaited his arrival.

"Now, what is this you wanted to see me about, Reverend Father?" asked the king of Dyfed.





"What you are about to hear must never leave this church," said Bishop Dubric. "Taliesin, you know it best; you were there, after all."

"It is not known abroad what really occurred at Tintagel," began Taliesin.

"Uther and Igerna, wife of Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, had fallen madly in love. Gorlois found out about it, and forbade Igerna to ever speak to Uther again. Furthermore, he renounced his alliance with Camelot."

"This grieved Uther greatly. His grief was driven to madness by the forked-tongue of Menuu the Magician. Menuu convinced Uther to go to war against Cornwall and take Igerna for his own wife."

Kynyr was awash with shock at the thought of one of his dearest friends doing such a ruthless deed.

"We tried our best to counteract Menuu's magic," said Dubric, "but Uther's love for Igerna was too strong."

"One night during the siege," continued Taliesin, "Uther was desperate to penetrate the castle. Menuu promised him that through certain incantations Uther could assume the guise of Gorlois and enter Tintagel secretly. This pleased Uther, but it came with a price: Uther had to swear an oath to Menuu that he would give Menuu whatever he asked for, even his own flesh and blood. Uther swore the oath and stole into the castle. That night, he killed Gorlois, and took Igerna to be his wife."

"I will find that serpent Menuu and slay him!" growled Kynyr.

"Your anger is justified, my Lord," said Dubric, "but one cannot simply hunt down Menuu like a beast. He can take on a thousand shapes."

"Well, what do you want me to do, then?!" barked Kynyr.

"We want you to foster the child," said Taliesin.

Kynyr was somewhat taken aback.

"Foster the prince?!" he said, incredulously.

"My visions have revealed that Menuu may try to take the child as payment," said Taliesin.

"Why does Uther not ask me himself?" inquired Kynyr.





"Because in order to keep Menuu in the dark about the child's whereabouts," said Dubric, "Uther must not know where he is."

Kynyr sighed heavily.

"Alright," he said at last, "I'll do it."

The citizens gathered into the church with great pomp. Sunday worship was an auspicious occasion in Camelot in those days, but today was a special day: the christening day for the new prince of the realm.

The prayers were said, the scriptures read, and the sermon preached. It was time for the rite of baptism. Igerna and Uther stepped forward with the young prince. Kynyr and Taliesin presented themselves as his godfathers, as was the custom.

"Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?" asked Dubric.

"I renounce them all," answered Kynyr and Taliesin in unison.

"DOST thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth? And in Jesus Christ his only-begotten Son our Lord? And that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary: that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: that he went down into hell, and also did rise again the third day: that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: and from thence shall come again at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead? And dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost: the holy Catholic Church: the Communion of Saints: the Remission of sins: the Resurrection of the flesh: and everlasting life after death?" asked Dubric.

"All this I steadfastly believe," answered Kynyr and Taliesin.

"WILT thou be baptized in this faith?" asked Dubric.

"That is my desire," answered Kynyr and Taliesin.





"WILT thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?"

"I will," answered Kynyr and Taliesin.

Dubric then prayed, and took the boy in his arms.

"Name this child," said Dubric.

"Arthur," said Taliesin.

"Arthur," said Dubric, dipping the child into the font, "I baptize thee in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

"Amen!" said the congregation together.

Dubric made the sign of the cross on Arthur's head. Just as he did so, he felt something climb up his leg. Suddenly, the head of a snake emerged from the sleeve of his alb and bit his hand. Igerna shrieked. Uther took the snake by the neck and cast it to the floor. Instantly, the creature transformed into Menuu the magician. All present gasped and screamed.

"Menuu!" cried Uther in horror.

"Uther Pendragon," said Menuu, "The time has come! Fulfill your oath!"

"W-what is it you desire, Menuu?" asked Uther.

"What else but the boy?" said the magician with a wicked grin.

"Then you'll have to go through me!" said Kynyr, stepping to the fore.

Menuu laughed.

"You cannot break your oath, Uther!"

"The child belongs to God, Menuu," said Dubric. "Your heathen gods have no claim on him!"

Menuu's smile turned to a hateful stare.

"You made an oath, Uther!" he barked. "You cannot recant now!"

"He's right," said Uther. "I must fulfill the oath."

"No!" cried Igerna.

"Give me until sunrise tomorrow to prepare," said the king.

"Then what?" snapped Menuu. "Tomorrow you'll ask for another day, and then another. No! I will have Arthur NOW!"

"The terms of the oath allow for one day to prepare," said Taliesin in a calm





but stern voice. "He is entitled."

"Very well," said Menuu. "Until Sunrise tomorrow, and not a moment more!"

The magician transformed into a crow and flew out the window.

Joy had turned to mourning in Camelot. The king sat on his throne, weeping. He desired no consolation, for he felt it right to mourn that his only son should suffer for his father's foolishness.

Dubric entered the throne room and bowed his head toward Uther.

"Are you well, Reverend Father?" asked the king when he had regained his composure.

"Taliesin and Bryn healed me from Menuu's poison," replied the bishop.

"Good," replied Uther.

"Do you know what you will do?" asked Dubric.

"No," replied Uther.

"Leave that to me," said Dubric.

"What will you do?" asked Uther.

"It's best if you are kept ignorant of that," replied the Bishop.

The night was black and quiet as a tomb. Taliesin donned a dark cloak and took a bag containing provisions for the journey.

"I still think I should be the one," said Kynyr.

"They'll expect that," said Dubric.

"I hoped this time would not come at all," said Igerna, hugging Arthur tightly. It would be many years before she would see the prince again.

"I will make sure and raise him right," said Kynyr, patting her gently on the shoulder.

She kissed the boy and handed him off Taliesin. Her face was damp with tears.

Taliesin took the boy and disappeared into a hole in the wall.

Taliesin reemerged in the forest some distance away, the babe wrapped in his arms. There he was met by a host of elves. Their captain held by the reins





such a steed as has rarely been seen in the world of men since that time: a griffon, the preferred mount of the cavalry of Avalon.

"Thank you, Prince Gwyn," said Taliesin, inclining his head.

"We were too glad to aid you," answered the elf prince.

Taliesin mounted the mighty beast, and took off for the Kingdom of Dyfed.

Morning was red in Camelot. Menuu rode to the gate on a black horse.

"Uther!" he called out. "It is morning! Give me what I am owed!"

The gate opened with a great creaking. Uther walked out, head held high, his sword was at his side. Kynyr stood a little behind him.

"I would," said Uther, "if I knew where it was."

Menuu's face contorted with rage.

"You are lying!"

"I'm not," replied Uther. "In all truth, I know not where the babe is."

"Are you aware that I can call forth the armies of Annwyn and raze this city to the ground?!" hissed Menuu.

"You're welcome to try," said a voice from Menuu's rear. The druid turned around to see the hosts of Avalon gathered around Camelot, ready to defend it. Menuu stared in shock for a moment and then regained his composure.

"Very well," he said nonchalantly. "I will be on my way, but know this: I will get what I am owed one way or another. The line of Pendragon shall suffer!" The druid turned his horse about and rode away from Camelot with all speed.

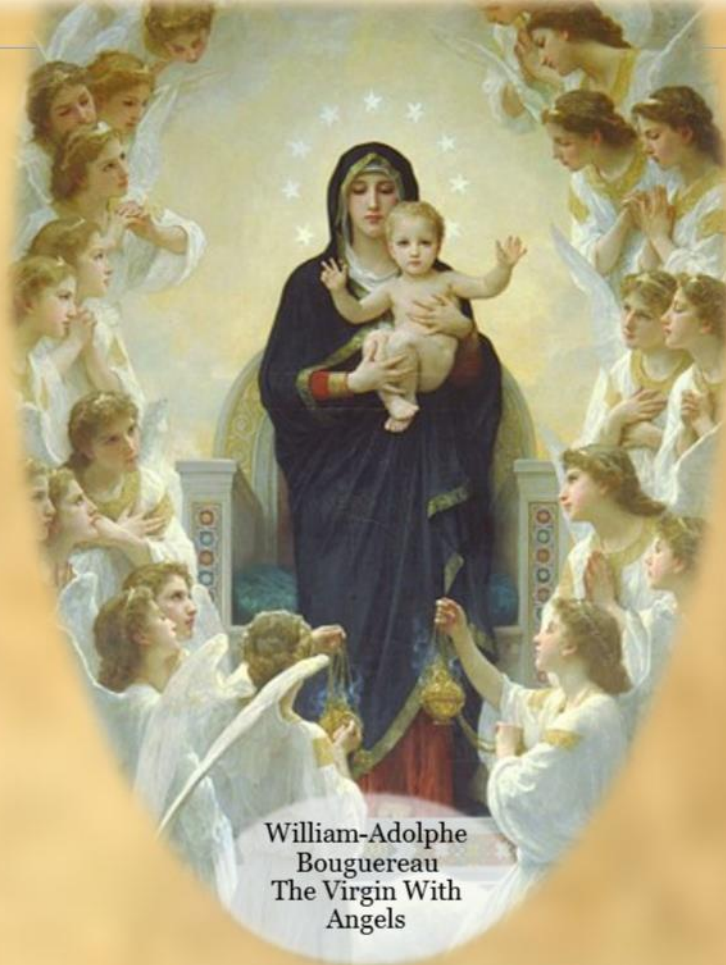
"He'll be back, you know," said Bishop Dubric.

"I know," replied Uther with a sigh. "But at least the babe is safe."



Regina Caeli

By Sarah Levesque



Rejoice,
Oh Mary,
Heavenly
Queen!

William-Adolphe
Bouguereau
The Virgin With
Angels

Gaude Maria! Thy son who died was living seen! Alleluia, laetare oh Maria!

So begins an English translation of the great hymn "Regina Caeli, Jubila", written in Latin in the 1600s. Yet today, not many denominations recognise the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Heaven. As someone who grew up with the idea, it baffled me when I realized that others didn't hold it. In fact, I have heard that people reject this title of Mary because in the Old Testament, the Lord spoke through the prophet Jeremiah, punishing the people of Judah for worshiping 'the queen of heaven' (see Jeremiah 44:17-30). To that objection I will simply say that neither Jesus nor Mary had been born yet, so Mary was not yet the queen of Heaven. At the time, the title was used to denote various sky or moon goddesses, none of which were supposed to be worshiped by the Jews, hence God's wrath.

But now, the case for Mary as Queen of Heaven.

It is common knowledge that Jesus was the King of the Jews, enthroned on the Cross. But in the Israelite culture, the queen was not the wife of the king, but the king's mother, harkening all the way back to the time of Solomon. This is seen in the following passage, when Solomon's half-brother Adonijah asks Solomon's mother

Bathsheba to intercede for him to the king: "Bathsheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand" (2 Kings 2:19). The idea of the king listening to his mother, carefully considering what she asks of him, ought not be a novel one in Jewish or Christian culture, as one of the ten commandments is "Honor thy father and mother", as mentioned many times in the Bible (the first being Exodus 20:12). But that did not by itself give Bathsheba the queenship - that was a decision of Solomon's. The king was obligated to bow to no one besides God, and yet he bowed to his mother. Then he had a seat - that is, a throne - placed on his right side for her. This is an indication that she would rule with him - think of the Apostles Creed that says that Jesus sits "at the right hand of the Father", and consider that James and John (or their mother) asked for places at Jesus' right and left (Mark 10:35-45, Matthew 20:20-28).

Now, this was not a one-and-done circumstance. It is not an accident that any time a new king is named in the books of Kings that his mother is named, not just his father. In addition, there are many instances throughout the books of Kings and Chronicles, plus another in the book of Jeremiah, that indicate this. Consider the following passages:

2 Chronicles 15:16 - And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he [Asa] removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.

2 Chronicles 22:3 - He [Ahaziah] also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.

2 Kings 24:15 - And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

Jeremiah 29:1-2 - Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon; (After that

Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;).

These last two verses must be looked at together, for both kings were being deported to Babylon with all the most important members of the royal household. 2 Kings notes that King Jehoiachin's mother was also deported with the king, not specifying the queen, whereas Jeremiah specifies that Jeconiah's queen was deported, not specifying his mother. It seems reasonable to me, considering the previous verses (including the one about Solomon and Bathsheeba), to say that Babylon took the king and the queen mother in both circumstances.

Now, fast forward to Jesus and Mary. Jesus is the Davidic King, the prophesied Messiah (see Luke 1:32, Isaiah 9: 6-7, Matthew 1, Matthew 2:6, etc). Traditionally, that makes Mary his mother the queen. But Jesus is more than a king of earth, He is also the King of Heaven, which makes Mary the Queen of Heaven. It is Mary spoken of in Revelation 12, which begins,

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

The crown of twelve stars shows her queenship of the twelve tribes of Israel. She stands in the heavens to denote she is Queen of Heaven, with the moon - denoting the moon goddesses previously called queens of heaven - under her feet, for she has superseded them and has been given the title by her Son.

Mary is the perfect example of "the last shall be first and the first shall be last" (Matthew 19:30 & following). In Nazareth she was little more than a carpenter's betrothed. But when the angel of the Lord came to her with God's request, she immediately said "Yes" (Luke 1:26 & following). When she heard that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant, she went straight to help her (Luke 1:36-40). When she was obliged to go to Bethlehem when she was due to give birth, she went (Luke 2:4-5), and so forth throughout her life. Not once does the Bible tell of her complaining, refusing, or turning from the path God had set her on, but instead pondering things deep in her heart, and submitting as the handmaid of the Lord (Luke 1:38, 48; Luke 2:51). And for this she was greatly exulted, as she said, "For [God] hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." Indeed, she is more than blessed, for through her humility and loving service to God and family, she was raised to the Queenship of Heaven.

It is for these reasons that we honor Mary as Queen of Heaven, and we ask for her intercession to Jesus as Adonijah asked for Bathsheeba's intercession to Solomon. This is why we pray the Hail Mary, taken from various sections of the Bible:

Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you! (Luke 1:28)

Blessed are you among women and
blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. (Luke 1:42)

Holy Mary, Mother of God, (Luke 1:43)

Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. (2 Kings 2:19, James 5:16)

Amen.



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Bible Trivia!

Answers on the following page

1. Which of the following wanted to lead the Israelites?
 - A) Moses
 - B) Barak
 - C) Gideon
 - D) Saul
 - E) None of the above

2. Gideon was so concerned by the idea that God wanted him to lead the Israelites he asked God for confirmation
 - A) Once
 - B) Twice
 - C) Three times

3. Women had leadership roles in Israel as
 - A) Priestess
 - B) Queen Mother
 - C) Prophetess
 - D) Both B and C

4. True or False - in the Bible, God helped the Israelites through pagan leaders
 - A) True
 - B) False

5. Who was the first disciple to follow Jesus?
 - A) Peter
 - B) Paul
 - C) Andrew
 - D) John

6. True or False - Paul was the leader of the apostles?
 - A) True
 - B) False

7. True or False - The leaders of Israel were always honorable and just
 - A) True
 - B) False

Bible Quiz Answers!

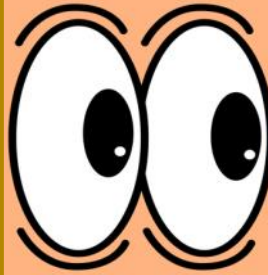
Questions on the previous page

1. E: None of the above. Moses (Exodus 4:1-17), Barak (Judges 4:8), Gideon (Judges 6:36-40) and Saul (1 Samuel 10:22) all took some convincing before they agreed to lead Israel.
2. B: Gideon was so concerned by the idea that God wanted him to lead the Israelites he asked God for confirmation twice (Judges 6:36).
3. D: Women had leadership roles Israel as Queen Mother (2 Kings 2:19, 2 Chronicles 15:16) and Prophetess (.Judges 4, Luke 2:36).
4. A: True - God did help the Israelites through pagan leaders, such as Cyrus, the Persian emperor who helped rebuild the Temple after the exile (Ezra 1, Isaiah 45).
5. C: Andrew was the first disciple to follow Jesus (John 1:35)
6. B) False. Peter was the leader of the apostles . This may be seen in how Peter often speaks for the group, how he is honored throughout the book of Acts, and how at the council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) he is the last to speak.
7. B: False - The leaders of Israel were not always honorable and just. There were many kings of Israel who were neither honorable nor just, among other leaders.

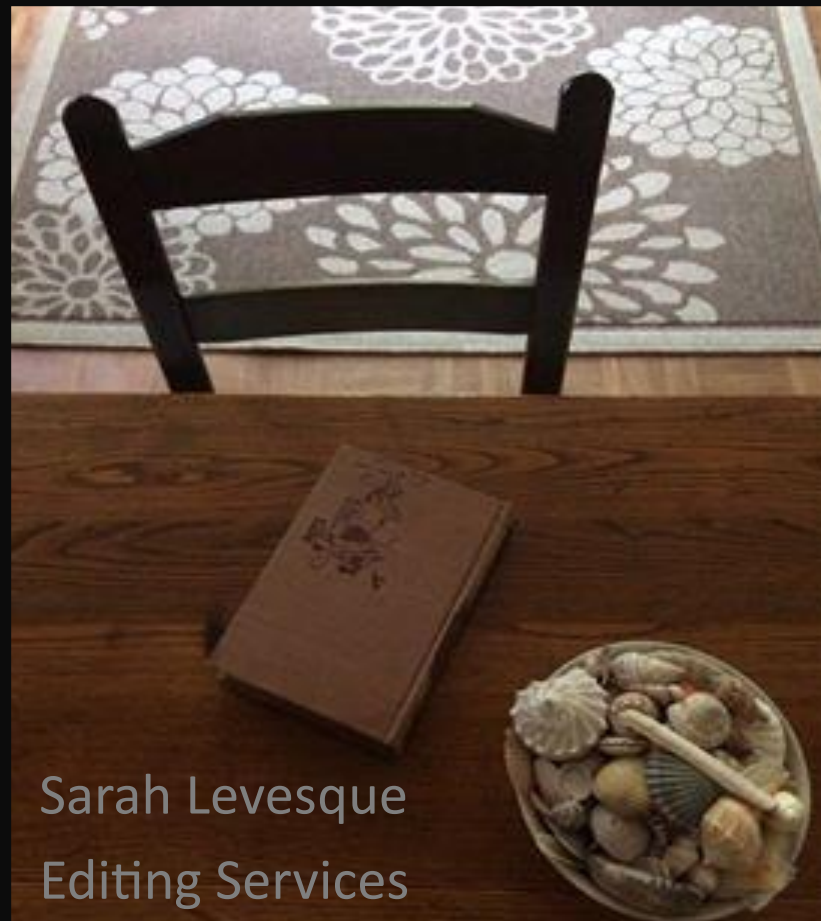
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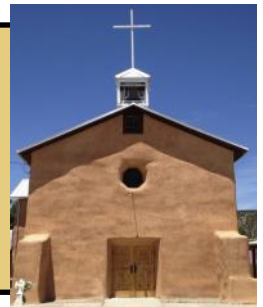


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